2: Sanders E-5 (no date) 1949 EE1 Bulgaria EE1

was directing the group, rather than the hostess, suggested that they take up work once more.

I spent many hours in the fields chatting with these women. There was a hypnotic rhythm of sound and color in their work as the line of black-clad bodies, and white headcloths, swayed forward together through the thin green blades. In the high altitude everything was sharply defined: the red-roofed village two miles away, the puffs of white cloud infinitely high in the blue, the strong harsh peasant voices close by. While the women worked they sang old folk songs about beautiful heroines and the brave Krali Marko, a legendary Balkan hero who carried out prodigious feats against the Turks, or of peasant girls knitting gay stockings for village boys. The songs were usually romantic and often were cheerful in theme; but now and then one was moved by a haunting sadness deeper even than that of the Negro work songs. Hour after hour I used to hear the unhappy music rise in its bizarre cadence; day after day for three weeks the corn was hoed in one field after another. Week after week the sun beat down on Vitosha and the Sofia plain, while summer burned itself away. The corn grew waist high, then shoulder high, and finally yielded the golden ears to the strong brown fists of some boy or girl at the autumn cornhusking *sedenki.*

Early July was the haying season. Each sunrise would find most of the villagers out in the fields. Some of the men with their sharp scythes cut the hay in even swaths, letting it lie as it fell, to dry in the parching sun. Others would load the cured hay onto the wagons fitted out with ladderlike sides. As the wagons rolled through the village streets they were greeted by the little children who had had to stay at home with their aged grandparents or great-grandparents. The haystacks, whether left in the field or dressed near the house, were weighted down by lines to which heavy stones had been attached.

One could not be with the peasants long at haying time, or indeed at any other time, without sensing their feeling of close dependence upon the weather. In fact, I soon found myself sharing this feeling, although I remained somewhat dubious of the infallibility of the signs by which they "read the weather." They believed, for example,

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The coming of the boys might or might not stop the work.[2] Quite
584 often the girls were able to accomplish a great deal in spite of the
574 boys, but usually the entertainment which began soon after the boys
883 arrived distracted the girls from their task. There was much singing.
533 Someone struck up an old ballad and others joined in. Then, after a few more ballads, someone ventured a popular song. I once asked a young woman whether she ever sang any modern songs (knowing well enough that she did). She replied:

"Yes, the Dragalevtsy girls know almost all the popular songs. They hear the boys singing them on the street or at *sedenki* and then ask some boy who is a relative to write down the words. If they see that the song is not appropriate, they will not sing it. They always learn the words of songs and never whistle or 'murmur' [hum]."

I wondered to what extent the patriotic songs in the school were replacing the folk songs. Here is what informants at one *sedenka* said:

"As soon as a girl leaves the school, she does not sing any of the songs learned in school, but starts singing again the old songs that she has learned from the old people. The boys, however, continue to sing the songs, chiefly military, learned in school."

No instrumental music was taught in the school, but the radio was beginning to have some effect on the peasants' choice of music. One man listened to the radio fifteen days, stopping almost all other activity, in order to get the words of a jazz song then popular. These he sang with great gusto to his admiring friends. Many of the young people were becoming ashamed of the old songs and told me that they were out of date. The new popular songs that they learned were contained in *Pesnopoiki* (songbooks) bought for a few cents on market days.

[535] The singing of some particularly lively tune at the evening gath-
584 erings[2] might lead to folk dancing in which both the boys and the
883 girls took part. The very foundations of the house seemed to shake as the feet shuffled in time to the music. Parlor games of various sorts, quite similar to those played at a rural church social in America, were frequently played at these *sedenki*. This meant that the girls laid aside their spinning entirely and what started out as a work-bee became entirely a social gathering.

[2] The "sedenka", or "spinning party". The Bulgarian part of an American pioneer cornhusking and quilting bee -- Analyst]

"sedenki." -- Analyst]

the contempt of the Turks and Greeks, they did not need to be ashamed of their own traditions. In the past the Bulgarians had had their own empire and had received tribute from the wise Greeks and they had had the most progressive tsars and patriarchs of all the Slavonic peoples and they had been among the first peoples to accept the Christian faith, which they had later handed on with a rich literature to the other Slavs.

With its poetic inspiration and its ardent love for his country, the History of Paisi appeared as a torch to kindle the lowly and undeveloped national consciousness of Bulgaria. It set it ablaze and thus caused the surprising advance of the Bulgarian people. In one century they turned from an amorphous mass to one of the strongest nationalities of the Balkans. They raised their level of culture, and developed their art, science and literature.

It goes without saying that the History of Paisi could not have worked this miracle, if it had not found a fertile soil in the souls of the Bulgarian people, and more than that, if the soil had not been cultivated by a long series of enthusiastic imitators of Paisi. Between 1800 and 1850 these writers, without stopping, first in manuscripts and later in printed books, continued to arouse the national consciousness of the Bulgarians and to spread enlightenment in their native land. The aims of these men were purely practical. The definite object of Sofrony Vratchanski, of Neofit Bozveli, of Neofit Rilski in their works which are almost always of a didactic character, was to help their people, to educate them and to lead them on the path of proper development. Yet so strong and so inspired was the love that these men had for their

[i.e. the eighteenth century --- Analyst]